

Why talk about Food Waste?



India has always been in frugal, by tradition wasting anything particularly food, has always been considered an 'evil deed'. The trend may have continued in the rural pockets but in cities, towns throwing away surplus food is no big deal at all. And now with obesity emerging as a national epidemic parents worry more about waistlines than waste.

Mostly all of us strive to eat less. But if we eat smarter we shall help save money but also our vital natural resources. How? Land and water are the most important inputs for agriculture, right? If we find a less wasteful way of farming and growing simultaneously we shall be able to ease the pressure of their natural resources. However, it is always better to prevent food waste, rather than manage its waste, however efficiently. Food wastage cripples our country's economy. It leads to wasteful use of chemicals, fuel for transportation. Rotting food produces methane which is another harmful greenhouse gas.

Name

School Name

Class Date

GOBAR GYAN

What is food wastage? Simply put, it means throwing away food which could have been eaten by oneself or by others. This could happen for various reasons – buying more than needed, or because it has been too long on the dining table. We are all guilty of pushing older food to the back the fridge or cupboard and placing fresh food in front.



Ways to reduce food wastage:

- 1. Write a list:** Check the ingredients in your fridge and cupboards, then write a shopping list for just the extra you need.
- 2. Buy what you need:** Avoid buying fruits and vegetables in packed form. Then you can buy exactly the amount you need.
- 3. Rotate:** When you buy new food from the store, bring all the older items in your cupboard and fridge to the front and use them first.
- 4. Use up your leftovers:** Give yesterday's dinner a new life in a new recipe. Transform grilled chicken, steak or veggies into sandwiches or pasta salad.



Hi! I am Pandit Gobar Ganesh. You will find me in Gobartimes—a magazine that tells you how your everyday life is linked to the world around you. Hooked, huh? If you want to know more about me and Gobartimes visit us at:

www.gobartimes.org

5. **Freeze:** Cook in batches so that you have meals ready for those evenings when your friends come over for an unplanned dinner party.

ACTIVITY 1

At home:

Ask your parents and check how much food is wasted per day at home. Write down the answers in the space provided.

1. Name of the person interviewed: _____
2. What does your household consist of? _____
3. Who cooks the evening meal usually? _____
4. How often do you buy fruits, vegetables and other products for consumption in the house? _____
5. Which is the most frequently cited reason for throwing out food? _____
6. Which is the most frequently thrown away food item at your home? _____
7. Can we stop this practice of throwing away food? _____
8. a) If yes, how? _____
b) If no, why? _____
9. Based on rough calculations find out approximately how much food is wasted everyday?

10. Have you ever considered the ill-effects of rotting food/wasted food? _____

ACTIVITY 2

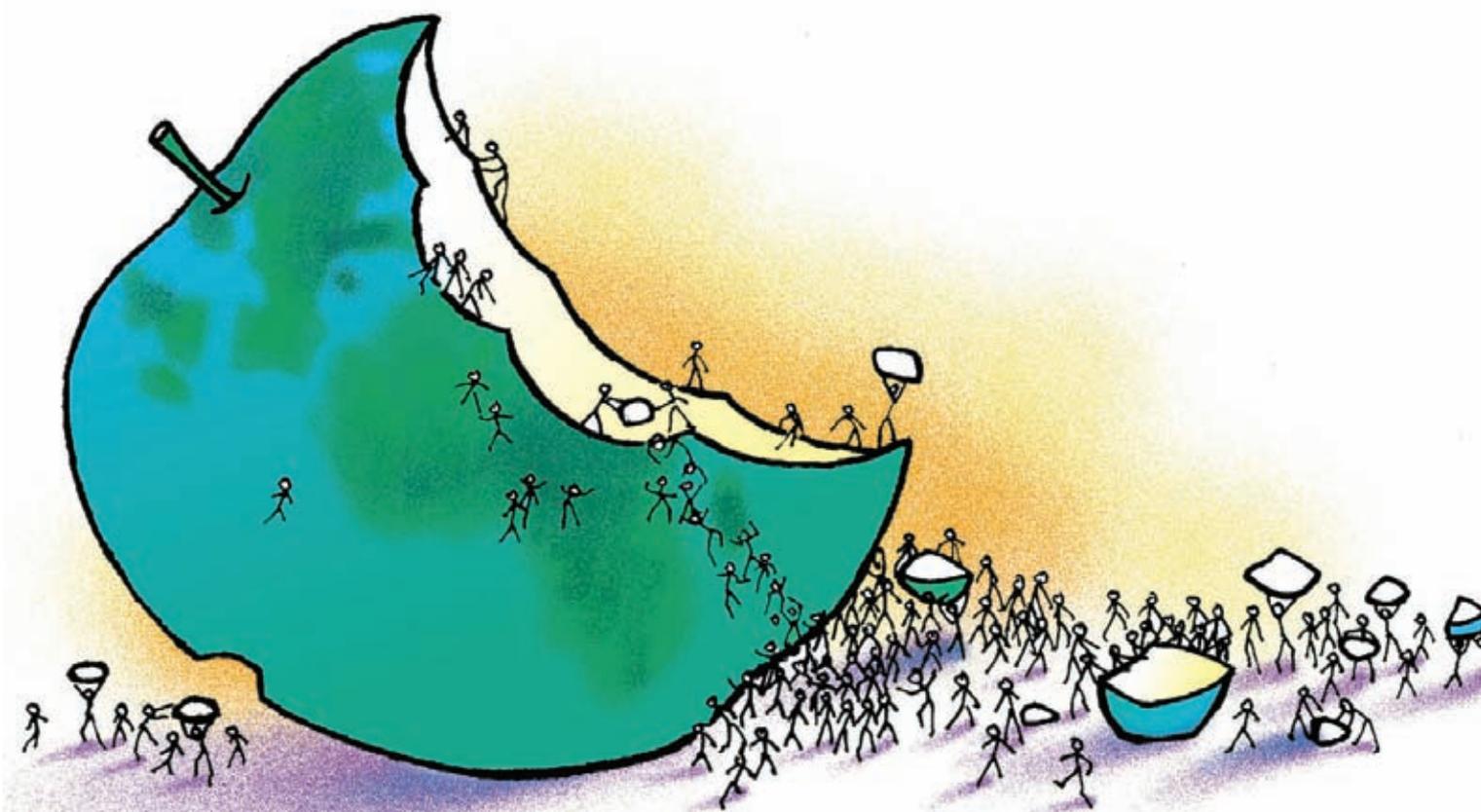
At school:

- a) Get in touch with canteen workers and officials in school. Ask them how much food is wasted or produced in excess each day at the canteen.

Ask them what they usually do with the excess food produced each day.



- b) Organise your eco-club to get in touch with food banks or food rescue organisations. Rather than wasting food, collect all the safe and healthy food from your canteen and donate it to these organisations. They will feed it to those in need.



ACTIVITY 3

- During the eco-club meeting, discuss with members the harmful effects of wasting food.
- Get together with your friends and eco-club members and come up with campaigns and slogans like: 'Love food. Hate waste' or 'Wrap it. Don't waste it'.

You could also organise a slogan writing competition on the theme 'Wasting Food' where students can come up with some new, innovative slogans.

If we can prevent food from being wasted, we shall have more to share and distribute. Production and processing would be controlled and costs significantly less. Result? More food availability therefore more people fed. But without taking a toll on our land and water resources.



Prepared by: Elsa Sam

If you found the activity sheet interesting, email us at eeu@cseindia.org or write to:

Environment Education Unit, Centre for Science and Environment

41, Tughlakabad Institutional Area,

New Delhi-110062 or call 29955124 Extension 219